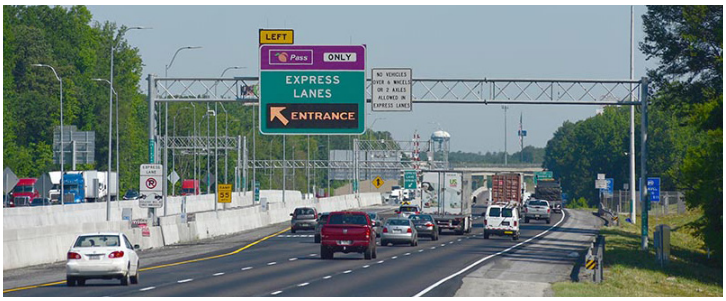
Georgia Express Lanes

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Georgia Express Lanes Network?

The Georgia Express Lanes are optional, priced-managed lanes that complement existing interstates in some of the most congested corridors around metro Atlanta. Express lanes are travel options for motorists and transit customers to bypass congestion for a free-flowing commute. The lanes are a choice that provide more reliable trip times and improve traffic flow. All Georgia Express Lanes rely on congestion-based pricing, with toll rates rising as demand increases during peak-travel times and falling at off-peak times.



What are the benefits of express lanes?

- Provides more reliable trip times
- Offers more consistent travel speeds
- Enhanced transit options and opportunities
- Impacts regional economic growth positively
- Improves air quality
- Generates revenue

Who owns and operates the express lanes?

All Georgia Express Lanes are owned by the Georgia Department of Transportation (Georgia DOT). Operation of the pricing aspects of the lanes, including all customer service functions related to Peach Pass is managed by the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA).

In Operation

I-85 Express Lanes

I-75 South Metro Express Lanes

Northwest Corridor Express Lanes

I-85 Express Lanes Extension

MMIP

SR 400 Express Lanes

I-285 Eastside Express Lanes

I-285 Top End East Express Lanes*

I-285 Top End West Express Lanes*

I-285 Westside Express Lanes

Long-Range

I-20 East Express Lanes

I-20 West Express Lanes

I-75 Gap Express Lanes

**The I-285 Top End Express Lanes will be delievered as two construction packages*

GDOT Georgia Department of Transportation

Georgia Express Lanes Get in. Get going.

Peach Pass Keep Moving.

What are the different express lanes projects?

In Operation

- **I-85 Express Lanes:** Lanes run along I-85 from Chamblee Tucker Road to Old Peachtree Road in Gwinnett County. These lanes are 15 miles long and opened to traffic in 2011.
- **I-75 South Metro Express Lanes:** Lanes run along I-75 from SR 155/McDonough Road in Henry County to SR 138/Stockbridge Highway in Clayton County. These lanes run for 12 miles and opened to traffic in 2017.
- **Northwest Corridor Express Lanes:** The most innovative express lanes project in the country running 29.7 miles along I-75 from Akers Mill Road to Hickory Grove Road and along I-575 from I-75 to Sixes Road in Cobb and Cherokee counties. Opened to traffic in 2018.
- **I-85 Express Lanes Extension:** The lanes run 10 miles along I-85 from Old Peachtree Road to Hamilton Mill Road in Gwinnett County, connecting with the existing I-85 Express Lanes system. The extension opened in 2018.

In Development

- **SR 400 Express Lanes:** Adds two new express lanes in each direction on SR 400 between North Springs MARTA Station and McGinnis Ferry Road and one express lane in each direction from McGinnis Ferry Road to McFarland Parkway.
- **I-285 Eastside Express Lanes:** Adds one express lane in each direction on I-285 between I-20 and Henderson Road in DeKalb County.
- **I-285 Top End Express Lanes (two construction packages):**
  - » **I-285 Top End East Express Lanes:** Adds two at-grade and elevated barrier-separated express lanes in both directions from Henderson Road on I-285 to SR 400 and extends on SR 400 to the North Springs MARTA station.
  - » **I-285 Top End West Express Lanes:** Adds two at-grade and elevated barrier-separated express lanes in both directions from Paces Ferry Road to SR 400.
- **I-285 Westside Express Lanes:** Adds one express lane in each direction on I-285 between Paces Ferry Road in Cobb County and I-20 in Fulton County.

Why are the express lanes tolled instead of being carpool lanes?

Carpool lanes are not as efficient as express lanes. Studies show that express lanes have a much more reliable travel speed than carpool lanes. Express lanes offer a more efficient choice for motorists throughout the entire trip.

Why build more express lanes than general purpose lanes on the interstates?

Express lanes were adopted by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the Georgia DOT State Transportation Board in 2013 as the solution to manage congestion in metro Atlanta as more people and businesses move to the region. Instead of continuing to build general purpose lanes that will continue to fill up with vehicles, express lanes are managed by congestion pricing to combat congestion. Congestion pricing ensures express lanes provide more reliable trip times for those who choose to pay and for bus transit partners using the lanes and state-registered vanpools.

What is congestion pricing?

Rates on any express lane are based on a congestion-based pricing format, which increases the price during peak-travel times and decreases the price during off-peak times. Congestion pricing facilitates reliable trip times for those utilizing the express lanes including transit vehicles. Congestion pricing allows as many motorists as possible to use the lanes while still meeting expectations for free-flowing traffic.

How much will it cost to use the express lanes?

SRTA, who manages the pricing on the operational express lanes, has a minimum toll of 10 cents a mile on

all Georgia Express Lanes. During periods of very low demand, a minimum toll of 50 cents per trip, regardless of trip length, will be applied. The uniform pricing across all Georgia Express Lanes allows for greater customer ease and a consistent customer experience.

Why do I have to pay to use the express lanes? Don't my taxes already fund the roads?

Road construction is mainly funded through state gas tax collection and federal support; however, both the gas tax and federal funding have already been spent well in advance of the construction start date. Express lanes are a reliable source of funding that allows Georgia to invest in today's road maintenance, as well as future transportation investments. On top of that, funding from express lanes comes from Georgia and stays in Georgia.

Paying for express lanes seems unfair for some people. How do you plan to make sure everyone has a chance to use the express lanes, regardless of income?

The express lanes prices are set to rise or fall depending on the demand currently in the lane. If anyone chooses to not use the lane, they do not have to pay. In fact, studies show that this makes the system more fair and drivers of any income consistently choose the travel mode that works best for them and their circumstances.

How do police and other emergency services monitor the express lanes or provide assistance when there's a crash?

First responders have been trained and are well-equipped to operate within the express lanes. They coordinate closely with transportation officials to ensure they have 24-hour access to all parts of the highway, including the express lanes. Using dynamic messaging signs, security gates, and advanced communications systems, transportation officials can allow access to first responders at any time, even making the express lane the quickest way for emergency services to access any part of the corridor. To ensure motorist safety, Georgia DOT's Highway Emergency Response Operators (HERO) regularly monitor the express lanes and support emergency responders.

Are transit riders required to pay anything beyond normal fares on routes that access the express lanes?

No, there is no additional cost to access the express lane for bus-transit riders, state-registered vanpools, or public-transit providers.

How are fares collected?

The Georgia Express Lanes do not use toll booths. All fares are collected electronically using the Peach Pass. This technology, along with the operational express lanes, allows motorists to maintain consistent travel speeds. More information about the Peach Pass is available at **www.PeachPass.com**.

How do drivers obtain a Peach Pass?

All Georgia Express Lanes users can visit **www.PeachPass.com** or call the Peach Pass Customer Service Center at 1-855-PCHPASS (I-855-724-7277) to open a Peach Pass account and register their vehicle(s). Each vehicle in a household must be registered for a separate Peach Pass transponder; however, households with multiple vehicles can list up to 10 vehicles on one Peach Pass personal account.

As an added benefit, Georgia has also partnered with Florida and North Carolina to allow travelers to use the Peach Pass in these states. In the coming years, the number of states in which the Peach Pass is interoperable will continue to expand.

Is there an option to obtain a Peach Pass without a credit or debit card?

Yes, Peach Pass offers two pay options: the regular Peach Pass account and the BancPass Pay n Go account. The BancPass Pay n Go option is a cash reloadable toll account. More information can be found at www.bancpass.com or by calling 866-978-5061.

How much does a Peach Pass cost?

The Peach Pass transponder is free when obtained from SRTA. A minimum prepayment of $20 and a credit or debit card for future payment is required to set up a Peach Pass account. You can purchase your BancPass Pay n Go starter kit and reload cards at any participating Kroger location in Georgia.

Stay Connected

http://www.dot.ga.gov/DS/GEL
managedlaneinfo@dot.ga.gov (sign up for updates)
404-347-0185 (voicemail)

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Georgia Express Lanes Return on Investment

The Georgia Express Lanes constructed under MMIP will deliver positive societal benefits at a reasonable cost. A 25-year benefit-cost analysis proves the network yields a benefit of $1.13 for every $1 invested.

VALUE-ADDED FOR TRANSIT

44% travel-time reduction for transit vehicles, increasing time reliability and ridership for a total value of $147 million in transit benefits.

SAFER ROAD TRIPS

8% reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries generating $396 million in safety benefits.

RELIABLE TRAVEL TIMES

40 minutes in planning-times savings, improving travel-time predictability and dependability for a total value of $1.41 billion in reliability benefits.

TRAFFIC RELIEF

38% travel-time reduction in express lanes compared to general purpose lanes in 2040, resulting in travel-time savings of $2.25 billion over the analysis period.

REDUCE FLEET COSTS

10% reduction in motor fuel consumption, saving freight and passenger car customers over $240 million in vehicle operating costs.

CURB POLLUTION

9% (NOx, VOC, PM2.5) reduction in vehicle emissions due to less congestion and faster travel times for an estimated value of damages avoided of $10 million.